UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
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The Middle Eastern and North African Music Ensemble

Michael Frischkopf, Director
Jullian Fulton, Teaching Assistant
Thursday, March 29, 2012 at 7 pm
Convocation Hall, Old Arts Building

Programme

Assiss Wara' (Snip Paper), in maqam Hijaz. Composed by Assi Rahbani (1923-1986) and Mansur Rahbani (1925-2009), arr. Ziad Rahbani (b. 1956), all Lebanese. This Arabic song is drawn from the Rahbani brothers' musical play *Nass Men Warak* (People of Paper), featuring Lebanese diva Fairouz (b. 1935). The musical is one of many collaborations between the brothers and Fairouz. Assi Rahbani married Fairouz; their son Ziad Rahbani, who has also composed extensively for his mother, works at the vanguard of the Arab contemporary music scene today. A *maqam* is a musical mode, providing scalar as well as melodic material to the musical creator, whether composer or improviser. Known as *makam* in Turkey, *dastgah* in Iran, *mugham* in Azerbaijan, and *tab`* in North Africa, the *maqam* phenomenon is widespread throughout the Middle East and North African region, providing an essential point of commonality.

Ya Hnayena (Oh kind one), in maqam Bayyati. Traditional Lebanese folksong, performed as a *mawwal* (solo vocal improvisation) by Jenny Boutros. The poet sings, in Arabic, "O kind one, the people of love on the night of love testified for us. Our mornings are golden, the sun rises over the green hills, and the yellow grapes. The sound of the wind is like that of twigs, awakening the sleeping nature with our song." (translation by Jenny Boutros)

Taqsim in maqam Bayyati. Oud (fretless lute) improvisation by Abdelhadi Ouajdouni, A *taqsim* is a solo instrumental improvisation, the musical form best suited to expressing the subtle essence of the *maqam* (musical mode), and the instrumental counterpart to the vocal *mawwal.*

Fika kullu ma ara hasan (In you everything I see is beautiful), in maqam Bayyati. This song exemplifies the *muwashshah*, a classical strophic Arabic poetic form originating in 10th century Andalusia (southern Spain). Many settings of the *muwashshahat* utilize complex rhythmic cycles; this one (called *al-mudawwar al-misri*, "the Egyptian cycle") is in 12 beats. Featuring Jenny Boutros.

Habbaytak tanseet al-nawm (I loved you and forgot sleep), in maqam Bayyati. Composition by Ziad Rahbani (b. 1956, Lebanon) setting poetry by Joseph Harb (b. c 1945). This beautiful song was composed for the Lebanese diva Fairouz. Featuring Reem Skeik.

Aghrab-e Zolf (curl of the hair), in maqam Bidad-Homayun on D. This song is an old Iranian *tasnif* (composition) credited to Ali-Akbar Shayda (a 19th century musician and derwish/sufi from Shiraz) or Mirza Hassan Hakim Elahi; the poem is by Nasser al-din Shah Qajar (1831-1896; the king of Iran). The poetry says: "your eyes and my fortune are out of order, my fortune because of you and your eyes because of wine. O' mermaid, come close to me and do not upset my frail soul. Do not leave me and do not break my heart until I die for you!" This classical composition has been popular in Iran for over 150 years. Featuring Hossein Azari. [Notes by Kioumars Poorhaydari]

Bahaar e del nesheen (the pleasant spring), in maqam Esfahan. This song was composed as an instrumental piece in 1961 by Roohollah Kaleqi, a renowned Persian musician. Several years later Bijan Taraqi wrote lyrics for the song, which were sung by the tender voice of Banan, a Persian musician and singer. The song, very famous across Iran, is in the maqam Esfahan, sounding similar to the minor scale. Featuring Ehsan Shahidi (who also provided the notes).

Da Magri. This song was composed by Nasser Razazi in 1967. Razazi was born in 1955 in Sena (Sanandaj), eastern Kurdistan (Iran), later emigrating to Sweden where he resided until 2004. Today he lives in Sulaymaniya, southern Kurdistan. The song is about two lovers who must separate for while; the man tells his lover that he will return with a colorful fabric called *hawri* that was very popular at that time. Our version, based on an arrangement by The Kamkars, a celebrated Kurdish musical group founded in Sanandaj in 1965, features Hoshyar Waissi (who also provided the notes).

Bote chin, in maqam Esfahan on C. *Ey mah-e man* (O' my moon) also known as *bot-e chin* (the Chinese idol) is another old Iranian *tasnif* whose music and poetry are also credited to Ali-Akbar Shayda (a 19th century musician and derwish/sufi from Shiraz). It reads: "O' my moon, O' the Chinese idol, O' lover. Since I gave you my heart and faith I cannot stay apart from you anymore. Whoever has seen you has forgotten himself. I cried so loud that everybody heard I cannot stay apart from you anymore. O' your intimate breath is my revival, as you are my Messiah today. Come, my friend! Come, my medic!" This classical composition has been popular in Iran for over 150 years. Featuring Kioumars Poorhaydari (who also provided the notes).

Intermission

Asa ma yuhashak ghali (I hope you never miss someone dear), in Maqam Nahawand on C. This contemporary popular song was composed by Omani singer Salah Al-Zadjali (b. 1979), with lyrics by Ayed Alkhalid: "I hope you never miss someone dear. Don't worry though; I am taking care of myself. I needed you back then, I swear, and needed your hug. Each time I saw our pictures I got more nostalgic! Do you know what was the hardest thing? It was you thinking that I am alive. I was not, but I got tired of being tired! I got tired of telling you I miss you! I got tired of holding a smile everyone knows is fake. If distance is tough, be sure what we have is stronger! "I love you" is more than enough. Say it and you'd create a miracle. I love you as much as our distance *[ghorba* – see below] is endless, as much as I am envied for having you!" With an opening *mawwal*, our performance features Ibrahim Subeh (who also provided the translation).

Matadjem yinmixan (Why all this hate between you?). Words and music by Ibrahim Ag Alhabib (b. 1959) aka 'Abaraybone', founder of Tinariwen (literally, "deserts"), a group of Touareg musicians from the Sahara in northern Mali. Having formed in Libyan refugee camps in 1979, the band fuses the "assouf" style of traditional Touareg music with electric guitar (taking over the traditional bowed *imzad*), and sounds of North African and Western rock music, and has become globally popular in recent years. "Matadjem yinmixan," from their 2007 album *Aman Iman* (Water is life, in the Tamashek language of the Touareg), is a message to the Touareg people asking them to stop perpetuating tribal and factional rivalries and to seek unity in order to better face the challenges of the modern world. (Many thanks to Andy Morgan, former Tinariwen manager, who generously provided the lyrics and song summaries for *Aman Iman*.) In 2012, Tinariwen won the World Music Grammy award for their most recent album, *Tassili* (2011). Featuring Dion Brocks on electric guitar.

Al Ghourba by Ali Hassan Kuban (1929-2001), born in Gotha, a Nubian village near Aswan, Egypt. Nubia is an ancient civilization, originally extending from what is today southern Egypt into northern Sudan, with its own distinctive language and musical traditions. Egypt's Nubians were displaced when their traditional homeland was largely flooded by the construction of the Aswan High Dam in the 1960s. In 1942 Ali Hassan Kuban moved to Cairo, where he lived in a Nubian enclave in Abdeen. Learning to play bagpipes and clarinet (he performed in *Aïda* with the Cairo Opera in 1949), he gradually developed his own sound combining Nubian lyrics and melodies with a jazzy Latin sound, rendering Nubian music extremely popular in Cairo (particularly for weddings), and ultimately—with the rise of "world music" in the 1980s—around the world. The lyrics to "Al Gourba" are in Mattoki, a Nubian dialect incorporating some Arabic, including the title, which designates an abstract quality of place, blending facts of distance and social isolation with feelings of longing and nostalgia. The term is typically applied to distant lands where people migrate in search of work. "Oh you who are alone, far away," sings the refrain, "you chose this as your destiny. Don't tarry; you are always in our thoughts. I've been ill since you travelled…"

Sunset Oro, in makam Buselik. Sunset Oro comes from the playing of Kocani Orkestra, a brass band from Macedonia. This piece is influenced by the music of Turkey in both structure and time signature. As the Ottoman Janissary army bands abandoned their brass instruments after their defeat in the early 1800's, they were taken up by Roma musicians, thus beginning the Balkan brass band tradition. The 7/8 time signature reflects a common rhythm of Anatolian folk music known as *aksak* ("limping"). Melodically it follows the Turkish makam of Buselik, which is similar to the Western harmonic minor. The solo reflects Roma style in Turkey today. Featuring Cam Neufeld on violin (who also provided the notes).

Hanghanni (We will sing), in maqam Hijaz. Composed in 1974 by Sheikh Imam (1918-1995) and Ahmed Fouad Negm (b. 1929), Egypt's most celebrated musical duo of leftist political provocation. Negm composed colloquial verses of critique and praise, lampooning authority figures, from Nasser to Sadat and even Nixon, eulogizing popular heroes (like Che Guevara), and celebrating a nation rooted in the common people. Sheikh Imam set these verses to music and sang them at private gatherings, accompanying himself on the oud. Banned from the public airwaves, the cassette era enabled broader distribution from the 70s on. "Hanghanni," a paean to the political power of song in an earlier era (Sadat's turbulent 1970s) was revived for January 2011's musical protests in Cairo's Tahrir Square. "We will sing, we will always sing, and spread goodness and raise hope. We will go around the turning world to the sound of the roaring melodies. We have the weapon and the cure, and the enlightened, awakened word." Featuring Dr Ashraf El Assaly, voice and oud.

Zeina, maqam Hijaz. Composed by Mohamed Abdel Wahhab (1907-1991), probably the Arab world's most celebrated composer-singer of the 20th century, this instrumental piece, originally composed for the film Zannouba (1950) featuring dancing legend Samia Gamal (1924-1994), has remained exceedingly popular among dancers worldwide, not only due to its illustrious history, but also for its many rhythm and tempo changes, including the distinctive *zaar* rhythm (also known as *ayoub*) traditionally performed by women healers in the Nile valley and East Africa. As lead dancer Chris Schneider writes, "Zeina" was a very popular song to dance in the North American nightclubs of the 70s and 80s...Although currently not as common, most dancers have at least one choreography or performance to "Zeina" in her dance history. These days, modernized versions of "Zeina" are often performed as group choreographies or in gala shows around North America, as the structure and grandeur of the music lends itself well to large stages and troupe performances. Featuring Chris and her dancers, and with *taqasim* by Dr Ashraf El Assaly (oud) and Ari Mastoras (violin).

Ya Mal al-Sham, preceded by a short mawwal, both in maqam Rast on C. The famous melody is attributed to 19th century Syrian Abu Khalil al-Qabani (1835–1902), composer, playwright, and founder of modern Arabic theatre, and the lyrics to `Umar al-Halabi. "Oh treasure of Damascus, oh my God, my treasure. The time is so long, my beauty, come here to me. Even if time is long, nothing has changed. I miss you, oh light of my eyes, until we repeat times past. I spent my most beautiful moments with you." Featuring Tony Abinader.

~Program Notes by Michael Frishkopf.

Tonight's concert was sponsored by the University of Alberta Department of Music and the Canadian Centre for Ethnomusicology.

The Middle Eastern and North African Music Ensemble is...

Abinader, Tony	Voice
Aizouki, Fadi	Oud and Buzuq
Al-Kheder, Amal	Voice
Ali, Nizar	Tabla
Azari, Hossein	Voice
Boutros, Jenny	Voice
Brocks, Dion	Electric Guitar
Campbell, Ross	Violin
Durand, Lorraine	Dance
Durand, Gabrielle	Dance
El Assaly, Ashraf	Oud and Voice
El Atia, Samira	Voice
Elzein, Deena	Voice
Frishkopf, Michael	Org
Frizzell, Mary	Voice
Fulton, Jillian	Voice
Jorati, Amin	Voice
Kanjilal, Manikarnika	Voice
Kascak, Lauren	Violin and Saxophone
Laine, Rhonda	Dance
Mastoras, Ari	Violin
Mattar, Raek (Rick)	Tabla
Nassar, Usama	Bongos
Neufeld, Cam	Violin
Ouajdouni, Abdelhadi	Oud
Piwowarczyk, Magda	Percussion and Dance
Poorhaydari, Kioumars	Tombak, Daf, and Voice
Salama, Marwa	Voice
Sapsuwan, Peewara	Violin
Scheelar, Catherine	Dance
Schneider, Chris	Percussion and Dance
Shaban, Nada	Voice
Shahidi, Ehsan	Voice
Shubeita, Mona	Voice
Skeik, Reem	Voice
Smith, Katie	Dance
Sokil, Allison	Voice
Steenstrup, Martha	Percussion
Subeh, Ibrahim	Voice
Waissi, Hoshyar	Daff, Tabla, and Voice
Watt, Justina	Trumpet
Wegner, Andreas	Bass
Wylie, Dana	Guitar, Oud
Yousefzadeh, Mahtab	Voice
Youssef, Nermeen	Voice

The Middle Eastern and North African Music Ensemble is a course available for University credit. For more information, contact Michael Frishkopf (michaelf@ualberta.ca), or visit: bit.ly/mename

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
UPCOMING EVENTS

World Music Week presents:
The Indian Music Ensemble
Friday, March 30, 2012 at 7pm in Convocation Hall
Admission by Donation

World Music Week presents:
The West African Music Ensemble
Saturday, March 31, 2012 at 7pm in Convocation Hall
Admission by Donation

Transcriptions for Winds...and more!
The University of Alberta Concert Band
Sunday, April 1, 2012 at 2 pm in Convocation Hall
Featuring works by Breugnon, Reed, and Perischetti
Admission by Donation

Music at Winspear presents:
World Music Sampler featuring
Iraqi Oud Virtuoso and Grammy Nominated Rahim Alhaj
With the West African, Indian,
and Middle Eastern and North African Music Ensembles
Sunday, April 1, 2012 at 3 pm at the Winspear Centre for the Arts
$60 Season Flex Pass | $20 Adults | $15 Seniors | $10 Students
Tickets available in advance through the Department of Music
(3-82 Fine Arts Building, University of Alberta | 780.492.0601 |
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Music at Winspear presents:
A Celebration of Winds & Voices
Symphonic Wind Ensemble, Madrigal Singers & Concert Choir
Tuesday, April 3, 2012 at 8 pm at the Winspear Centre for the Arts
Featuring works by Brahms, Grainger, Holsinger, Purcell & Whitacre
$20 Adults | $15 Seniors | $10 Students | $60 Season Flex Pass
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